

What is claimed is:

1 1. A device comprising:
2 a slot, having surfaces which are sized to receive a shorter
3 edge of a rectangular credit card, and surfaces of said slot
4 covering said credit card, said slot sized to receive, as an
5 inserted portion, less than $\frac{1}{2}$ of an overall length of said credit
6 card's longer edge; and

7 circuitry, responsive to inserting said credit card, which
8 operates to read information from the credit card when inserted.

1 2. A device as in claim 1 further comprising a portable
2 phone, said slot formed in surfaces on said portable phone.

1 3. A device as in claim 2 wherein said circuitry comprises
2 electrical contacts, reading information which is stored in said
3 credit card over said electrical contacts.

1 4. A device as in claim 1 wherein said circuitry reads
2 optical information from said credit card.

1 5. A device as in claim 3 wherein said circuitry provides
2 power at the time of reading, said power adapted for providing a
3 specified power amount to the credit card.

1 6. A device as in claim 1 wherein said reader covers
2 covers less than 1/3 of an overall length of said credit card's
3 longer edge.

1 7. A device as in claim 3 wherein said circuitry operates
2 to read information from a flat surface of the credit card.

1 8. A device as in claim 7 wherein said circuitry operates
2 to read information from surfaces at non-zero angles with one
3 another.

1 9. A device as in claim 1, wherein said slot is formed such
2 that said shorter edge is more completely inserted in said slot
3 than said longer edge.

1 10. A credit card formed with a rectangular element having
2 edges, and meeting areas between said edges, said element having
3 a first surface with writing indicating a credit card number
4 thereon, and a second surface opposite said first surface, said
5 writing being substantially in the direction of a long axis of
6 said rectangular element, said rectangular element also having a
7 short axis which is substantially perpendicular to said long axis
8 and further comprising machine readable credit card information,
9 stored in a way which allows reading of said credit card
10 information by inserting a surface other than said long axis into
11 a credit card reading slot.

1 11. A credit card as in claim 10, wherein said credit card
2 information is stored in a direction substantially parallel with
3 said short axis.

1 12. A credit card as in claim 10 further comprising a
2 credit card reading slot, sized to accept said short axis, and
3 including a reader therein which reads said credit card
4 information when said short axis is inserted into said credit
5 card slot.

1 13. A credit card as in claim 10, wherein said credit card
2 information is magnetic information.

1 14. A credit card as in claim 10, further comprising a
2 credit card reading slot, sized to accept a corner of said credit
3 card, and including a reader therein which reads said credit card
4 information when said corner is inserted into said credit card
5 reader.

1 15. A credit card as in claim 10, wherein said credit card
2 information is stored electronically in said credit card, and
3 said credit card further comprises terminals allowing readout of
4 information from said credit card electronically.

1 16. A credit card as in claim 10 wherein said credit card
2 information is stored optically on said credit card.

1 17. A credit card as in claim 10, further comprising at
2 least one battery in said credit card, powering electronic
3 circuitry in said credit card.

1 18. A credit card as in claim 17, further comprising a
2 serial communication device in said credit card, wherein said
3 credit card information is stored electronically in said credit
4 card and said credit card further comprises electronic terminals
5 allowing readout of said credit card information from said credit
6 card, said readout comprising communicating with said electronic
7 information via said serial communication device.

1 19. A credit card as in claim 10, further comprising a
2 credit card reading slot which receives only a portion of said
3 credit card and covers less than half of any part of a long axis
4 of said credit card when said credit card is inserted.

1 20. A method comprising:
2 storing information in a credit card sized device which is
3 rectangular and has a long axis and a short axis; and
4 reading information from said credit card from a direction
5 other than parallel to said long axis.

1 21. A method as in claim 20, wherein said reading comprises
2 inserting a portion of said credit card into a reader, allowing
3 said reader to read information from said credit card, and
4 issuing an audible indication when said reader is completed
5 reading said information from said credit card.

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1 22. A method as in claim 20, wherein said reading comprises
2 inserting said credit card into a credit card reader with one of
3 said short axes of said credit card being substantially parallel
4 to an axis of said reader, and reading information in a direction
5 parallel to said short axis.

1 23. A method as in claim 20, wherein said reading comprises
2 inserting a corner portion of said credit card, formed by an
3 intersection of two edges of said credit card, into said card
4 reader, and all other portions of said credit card being external
5 to said card reader, during said reading.

1 24. A method as in claim 20 wherein said reading comprises
2 inserting said credit card into a portable telephone. \

1 25. A method as in claim 24 wherein said inserting
2 comprises inserting said credit card in a direction in which a
3 short axis of said credit card is parallel to a wall of a housing
4 of said portable telephone and at least $\frac{1}{2}$ of a surface of a long
5 axis of said credit card remains external to said portable
6 telephone during said inserting. *25*

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1 26. A method as in claim 24 wherein said inserting
2 comprises inserting said credit card into said portable telephone
3 into direction in which only an edge portion of said credit card,
4 formed by an intersection of two edges of said credit card, is
5 inserted into said portable phone, and all other portions of said
6 credit card are external to said portable phone during said
7 reading.

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